

# Faces of Diversity

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the Boulder Labs  
Diversity Council

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*supporting diverse groups through awareness of workforce and cultural diversity*

The Boulder Labs Diversity Council (BLDC) is comprised of members from each of the agencies on the DOC Boulder campus: NOAA (OAR, NGDC, MASC, and NWS), NIST, NTIA/ITS. Due to Boulder's unique setting, the Boulder Labs' Board of Directors sanctioned the Council as a collaborative effort to combine agency resources, working together to present diversity and EEO activities and to sponsor site-wide diversity events. This Council does not replace individual agency-based diversity efforts, but rather supports and supplements such efforts. Our periodic meetings explore innovative programs that may have been implemented successfully elsewhere; make good "business sense" in terms of richer output from happier, more motivated employees; and make the Boulder Labs a more supportive and enjoyable place to work for everyone.

The BLDC is always looking for new members who are ready to roll up their sleeves and provide new energy and fresh ideas as members of the Council. If you would like to join us, please call one of the council members, listed on page 2, so we can invite you to attend our next planning meeting.

## Summary of FY2003 Events and Activities

The Council worked diligently this fiscal year to provide programs and activities for the Boulder staff. Here are some highlights of the activities held during the year:

### Chile Cook-Off

To celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month, BLDC sponsored a Chile Cook-Off Contest on October 18. Employees prepared a variety of chile recipes and a contest was held for "best red" and "best green" chile recipes. The event was so popular that Council members acted as traffic cops to direct everyone through the food lines and seating areas, which was a great problem to have! The chile was tasty and so were the burritos and Spanish rice, which were served as an accompaniment to the variety of tasty chiles. Adding to the fun, employees assigned entertaining names to their unique chile recipes.

Several employees volunteered as taste judges, including NOAA employees Steven Peckham, Daniel Wolfe, Julie Singewald, and Rich Lataitis and NIST employees Nino Canales and David Novotny. After serious consideration and much anticipation, the winners of the Chile Cook-Off were awarded. The 1<sup>st</sup> place winner for "Best Red" chile went to Teresita Molina for her "Chile Colorado." The 2<sup>nd</sup> place prize was given to Barbara Deluisi for her "Bodacious Beef and Bean." "Best Green" chile winners included 1<sup>st</sup> place winner Rich Beeler for his "Flamin' Shrimp Chile" and 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner Mike Belder for "Mike's Screaming Green Chile." First place winners received dinner gift certificates for two at a local restaurant. Second place winners received a Chile Cookbook. Winners also received certificates to proudly display.

Lively entertainment was provided by our very own Teresita Molina and Manuel Carillo with their band, *La Dinamita Juarez Y Grupo Brasas*. They provided a variety of Mexican and tropical music that had several co-workers dancing in the aisles. The event was a success because it provided employees with an insight into the Hispanic culture. As an added benefit, profits totaling \$420 were donated to El Comité de Longmont. Established in 1980, El Comité promotes a proactive partnership with those sincere in addressing the socioeconomic plight of Latinos in Colorado through communication, education, community development, and cultural diversity.

and *Weather Balloon Launch*.

A new addition to this year's program was the special kids' lunch menu offered at the DSRC Cafeteria, including such favorites as hot dog or hamburger meal deals and macaroni and cheese. In addition to spending time with their parents/sponsors, many of the children participated in a coloring contest, with prizes and refreshments presented at the end of the day. According to the evaluations completed by the children and parent/sponsors, the day was considered a huge success! Here are a few of their comments:

"This was a blast - hope to do it next year." (child)

"I had fun and want to come back next year!"



### Bring Your Child to Work Day

On April 24th, approximately 150 children attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual *Bring Your Child To Work Day* program. Thanks to many NIST and NOAA presenters, the events and activities provided a wide range of learning opportunities for the children. Each child set their own agenda by pre-registering for various activities scheduled throughout the day, such as: *Atomic Clock*, *Live from the Sun*, *Cryogenics Magic Show*, *Science on a Sphere*, *Corals & Climate*, *Life at the South Pole*,

(child)

"Keep up the excellent program!" (parent/sponsor)

"Thanks to all the volunteers. The planning and level of effort were very good and it showed in the presentations." (parent/sponsor).

### Alternative Dispute Resolution Seminar

On June 26<sup>th</sup>, NGDC's Mai Edwards gave a seminar entitled "Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR): A Review of the Mediation Process." Mai has over eight years of experience as an

ADR mediator and has participated in numerous employee sessions. A brief overview was given on ADR, followed by a "mock" mediation presented by Mai Edwards, Lisa Taylor, and Ted Habermann, in order for people to see the process in action.

### **Mentor Seminar Series**

On July 9<sup>th</sup>, Karyn Sawyer, Director of the Joint Office for Science Support (JOSS) of UCAR, was the first in the mentor seminar series. She described her ascent on the corporate ladder from when she started with no marketable job skills to Director. She shared with us what qualities make a good staff person and a good line-manager and how she was mentored along her successful and outstanding career path.

### **Disability Awareness Month Brown Bag Seminar Series**

During the week of July 21<sup>st</sup>, the BLDC sponsored daily lunch-time events to help Boulder employees gain more awareness regarding people with disabilities.

The daily presentations allowed employees to gain insight into the lives of co-workers who struggle daily with challenges that the average worker does not comprehend.

The Council was pleased that fellow employees Erin Presley-Froemke, Sean Coleman, and Steve Jenkins willingly shared challenges of their particular disabilities (dwarfism, cerebral palsy, and blindness respectively) in an

entertaining way to let us know what they believe is important for us to understand. The 50-plus people who attended gained a much better awareness and appreciation for the guest speakers' challenges. The program also benefited Erin, Sean, and Steve as they were uplifted by the positive response they received. Two of the speakers were videotaped. If you would like to check out the videotape, call Robin Wolf at x5525.

Other events during the week included the following:

- A video presentation about learning to value people with disabilities presented by Kathy Lock of Employment Link.
- A Powerpoint presentation on special hiring authorities for hiring people with disabilities presented by Wendy Dorsey of MASC Human Resources.
- A presentation addressing mental health issues (bipolarism, depression, and head injuries) presented by Ann Hurst of the Center for Disabilities.
- A presentation addressing concerns on Alzheimer's and dementia presented by Marcy Smallridge, Alzheimer's Assoc. Rocky Mountain Chapter.
- A presentation addressing hearing impairments and assistive technology presented by Ann Pruitt of the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind.

Out of 908 Boulder DOC employees that are serviced by MASC, 54 employees have reported disabilities (about 6% of

the Boulder site population). These statistics do not include guest researchers, students, contractors, or Boulder employees who are not serviced by MASC. These numbers also do not capture disabilities that develop due to the aging workforce.

### **What You Don't Know You Don't Know**

On August 6, 2003 Mauricio Velasquez, President of the Diversity Training Group in Herndon, Virginia, presented an exciting and fast-paced seminar at Boulder Labs entitled "What You Don't Know You Don't Know."

Sponsored by the NIST Diversity Program, it was promoted by the BLDC and open to all site occupants. Approximately 20 people from the various site agencies attended this seminar.

The seminar included information concerning the changing demographics of America and their implications in recruiting and retaining talent in the workplace. Participants were given a workbook containing a kit of everyday practical tips and techniques to deal with difficult people, situations, and circumstances.

The course evaluations that were returned indicate that participants enjoyed Mauricio's presentation style, benefited from his real-life examples, enjoyed the class interaction, welcomed the practical tips, and wished the course was longer. It is probably safe to say, they now know some of the things they didn't know before.

### **BIG Conference**

Blacks In Government (BIG) held its 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Training Conference in Denver, from August 25-29, 2003. This year's theme was "Achieving Excellence Through Professional Development."

BIG is an employee support and advocacy organization whose primary mission is to promote and enhance educational and training opportunities for African Americans in government. BIG has chapters throughout the United States and abroad, representing

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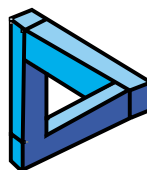
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Barbara Deluisi	4233
Georgia Madrid	6732
Julie Singewald	6818
Tony Tafoya	6731
Ann Thorne	6074
Carol Wolf	5828
Robert Zamora	6526

more than 2.5 million public employees. BIG continues to be the largest organization dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of African American civil servants.

Some of the topics covered at the training conference included information technology, communication skills, career development, personal performance and productivity, management and leadership skills, and EEO/human resource management.

BLDC members volunteered their time in support of the Training Conference on a variety of committees including customer service, evaluations, and logistics.



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